

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

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FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6974

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 0332

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD, MA, US

SUBJECT: TRADE ACT OF 1974 - GSP - MADAGASCAR

REF: A. STATE 28219; B. TANANARIVE 0162; C. STATE 21689;
D. STATE 282967, 12/28/74

1. EMBASSY BY DIPLOMATIC NOTE JANUARY 6 INFORMED MALAGASY FOREIGN MINISTRY OF PROVISIONS SECTIONS 502(C) (1) AND 502(C) (4) OF TRADE ACT, AS INSTRUCTED REF D. FOREIGN MINISTRY REPLIED LATE JANUARY WITH REQUEST FOR COPIES OF TRADE ACT FOR STUDY. THREE COPIES OF ACT TRANSMITTED TO FOREIGN MINISTRY IMMEDIATELY AFTER RECEIPT HERE FEBRUARY 18. IN ACCORDANCE PARA ONE REF C, EMBASSY PLANS AWAIT REPLY FROM FOOREIGN MINISTRY, IF ANY, WITHOUT INITIATING FURTHER APPROACH.

2. PENDING GOMR REACTION, EMBASSY HAS PREPARED BRIEF ANALYSIS OF PROBABLY VALUE TO MADAGASCAR OF GSP. ACCORDING TO EMBASSY'S LATEST INFORMATION, 86 PERCENT OF TOTAL MALAGASY EXPORTS TO THE U.S. IN 1973 ENTERED DUTY-FREE (COFFEE, VANILLA, CLOVE OIL, FISH AND SHRIMP). ON REMAINING EXPORTS (MAINLY SUGAR, CLOVES, AND GRAPHITE) U.S. TARIFFS ARE
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ALREADY QUITE LOW. ACCORDINGLY IT WOULD APPEAR THAT

EFFECT OF GSP ON MADAGASCAR'S CURRENT EXPORTS TO THE U.S. WILL BE SLIGHT OR VIRTUALLY NIL. POTENTIAL OF GSP TO BENEFIT MADAGASCAR WOULD BE GREATER IF MALAGASY SHOULD EVER DEVELOP MANUFACTURED OR SEMI-MANUFACTURED EXPORTS, BUT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS AT PRESENT ARE GEARED TO IMPORT-SUBSTITUTION INDUSTRIES OR EXPANSION OF EXISTING EXPORTS, RATHER THAN CREATION OF NEW EXPORTS.

3. IN REPLY TO PARA THREE REF A, IT IS DIFFICULT FOR EMBASSY TO ESTIMATE WHETHER GOMR MAY REJECT DESIGNATION AS BENEFICIARY DEVELOPING COUNTRY (BDC) UNDER PROVISIONS OF THE TRADE ACT. WITH RETURN OF MERCURIAL FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER DIDIER RATSIRAKA TO INFLUENTIAL ROLE IN GOMR FOLLOWING FEB 11 ASSASSINATION OF CHIEF OF STATE COL. RATSIMANDRAVA, AND GIVEN LIMITED VALUE OF GSP TO MADAGASCAR AT MOMENT, IT IS POSSIBLE RATSIRAKA MIGHT DECIDE TO TRY INFLUENCE GOVERNING MILITARY DIRECTORY TO REJECT DESIGNATION AS BDC, PARTICULARLY IF HE WERE MIFFED AT U.S. ON ANOTHER MATTER. LIKELIHOOD OF SUCH ACTION ALSO DEPENDENT ON WHETHER ALGERIA OR OTHER OF MORE RADICAL "THIRD WORLD" COUNTRIES MIGHT TAKE SIMILAR ACTION.
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